

June 15, 1768.

P O S T S C R I P T.

BRITANNIA's Chaplain begs Leave to inform the Public, that a **THANKSGIVING** is *prepared* for the *Press*, and he was in hopes that the *Press* would have been *employed* in Printing off the same as *this Day*; but, *de la Main à Bouche se perd souvent la Soupe*. He, therefore, thinks it would be inconsistent, with a Person of his Character, considering the present Situation of Things, to promise any Thing that is really *bazardous*, or, that will admit of a *Change*. Thus far, however, he will venture to assert, that, when **BRITANNIA's** Prayers and Intercessions, shall be answered, so as *John Wilkes, Esq;* Member for *Middlesex*, shall be released from his Confinement, he declares, *when that Time shall come*, he will accomplish his Design in printing the **THANKSGIVING**.

By Virtue of an Order from

BRITANNIA.

N. B. In the mean time, during his Imprisonment in the King's Bench Prison, the LAMENTATION of Britannia may be used, with the Prayers, &c. which are therein contained, as very suitable to compose, sooth, and still our Disquietudes, and Disappointments with respect to the Object of our Regard and Esteem.



A
SERIOUS ADDRESS
TO
YOUNG PERSONS
OF
BOTH SEXES.

BEING
A DISCOURSE

UPON

I. TIMOTHY, CHAP. iv. VER. 12.

"LET NO MAN DESPISE THY YOUTH."

EXETER:

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M.DCC.LXX.VII.

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S E R M O N,

&c.

I. TIMOTHY, CHAP. IV. VER. 12.

“LET NO MAN DESPISE THY YOUTH.”

THERE is a sort of sacred reverence due to *old age*, and its *silver locks* have commanded a degree of veneration in all civilized countries, upon supposition, that the older men grow, the greater advancement they generally make in wisdom, and profit daily by their experience. But *length of days* without such improvement, whilst it adds new grief and sorrow to those other natural decays and

A 2 infirmities,

infirmities, which old age necessarily brings along with it, instead of crowning them with glory, rather clothes them with shame and dishonour; and sets them in a rank even below that of mere children, who are not yet arrived to their *years of discretion*; and much farther still beneath those *happy youths*, who have set out betimes in the way they ought to go, and snatched the first opportunity of improving themselves in useful knowledge and cultivating the seeds of virtue. “*For honourable age*” (according to the observation of a wise man, if not a Solomon) i. e. age unto which honour is really due, “*is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years; but wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age. And the righteous, that is dead, shall condemn the ungodly, that are living; and youth, that is soon perfected, the many years and old age of the unrighteous.*” (vid. wisdom, ch. iv. ver. 8, 9, 16.)

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There is a way then suggested, by which a *young man* may not only raise himself above contempt, but arrive even so early to a degree of credit and reputation; by which, if persevered in, he may anticipate the honour and respect due to age and seniority; and, as he increases in stature, not only grow more and more in favour both with God and Man, but, should he be untimely cut off by the hand of Death, may leave a sweet memorial behind him. And indeed men's happiness in this life, as well as in the next, depends much on their first setting out, and the good conduct of their earlier years: As does likewise their capacity of doing good in their generation, and of becoming instrumental in promoting the welfare of those around them; in whatsoever rank or station of life, it shall please the Divine Providence to place them.

And accordingly the Apostle, who had invested his beloved Timothy, whose education

cation he well knew to be religious and virtuous, at such an early period of life, in an office, which required the greatest abilities and prudence for the due execution of it, charges him particularly to have the strictest regard to his conduct, at such a season especially; and to raise himself above that contempt, unto which any youthful levity or indiscretion might otherwise expose him. “ *Let no man despise thy youth, support the dignity of thy rank and station, (to speak in the language of ages to come) by giving no man reason to despise thee, notwithstanding thy want of years, which may be apt to disgust, if thou hast not something more than ordinary to recommend thee.*” But how is this to be done?—Not by assuming lofty airs; not by lording it over God’s heritage, and domineering over clergy and laity (under which denominations the christian church has been long since distinguished); nor by an artificial politeness of behaviour and dexterity of address, which might recommend him as a well-

well-bred person to men of the world, and produce a return of the same unmeaning compliments and civilities : Not, I say, by arts like these, but by more substantial, more significant and persuasive arguments ;

“ By being an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in truth, in purity :” By an exemplary life and conversation, as a man and a christian ; by a prudent and faithful discharge of his office, as a spiritual guide and governor of the church ; and by a behaviour altogether of a piece with the purity of the doctrine he preached, and recommended to the practice of his hearers. A conduct, which would soon remove any objections that might be made to his age, who had hardly arrived to the meridian of life, and was yet young in respect to years ; and would at length insure him that respect and esteem, which were necessary to support his authority among the new converts, over whom he was to preside, and to reconcile the rest of the world to the gospel. There being
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no greater *recommendation of*, nor objection that commonly creates a greater *dislike unto*, any scheme or proposal, than the personal character of him that makes it; except the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the thing, which are not always, nor indeed so often, the first points that come under contemplation.

And what the Apostle addresses unto Him in particular, as the governor and superintendant of the church at Ephesus, may be applied as properly to those inferior pastors and curates, who are ordained so early to any office and administration in the christian church, as they are in our own; which is commonly much earlier, than the age of Timothy can be supposed to have been, tho' spoken of as *yet a youth*, in comparison of some of the elders and presbyters, who were to be under his inspection; since their success in the ministry, I mean as to the *good influence* of their public or private exhortations, depends so much

much upon their character for piety and virtue, for purity of faith and manners ; as well as learning and acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures.

But such an application, were there any in this audience unto whom such advice might be applicable, would come from another quarter with greater force and propriety ; and has been repeatedly made on those solemn occasions, which render it most seasonable and pertinent. I shall therefore at present apply the words of my text in a larger sense, to young men in general, of whatsoever rank or station in the world ; whether already invested with any authority, or only expectants or candidates for those honours, or that respect and regard, which are due to those, who behave well in their particular station, be it high or low, public or private.

I say then, “ *Let no man despise your youth ;*” give not the world occasion to treat even your youth with contempt, as a

giddy and thoughtless period, as made up entirely of levity and vanity ; but rescue it from that reproach, which is commonly, and I am afraid oftentimes too justly, cast upon it : And this, not by affecting manhood before the time, which this forward age is apt to be very fond of doing, without reflecting upon that want of experience and understanding, which renders such an attempt ridiculous and unsupportable ; not by despising and making a jest of the bodily infirmities of the more aged (*“ Like the ungracious children of Bethel, who dared to mock even a Prophet upon account of his baldness (ii. Kings, ch. ii. ver. 23), unto whom, alas ! so many little wretches are to be seen in our own streets, who bear too near a resemblance in ill-manners and misbehaviour”*) ; but by a due attention to their wise maxims and observations, their sober advice and instructions, which ye will find for your benefit and advantage, and will certainly thank them for in your own minds, when ye arrive yourselves to years of maturity, and begin to reflect soberly

berly on things and their consequences; and will doubtless recommend to others upon the same benevolent principles, they were offered to yourselves at a season of life, when ye stood most in need of such faithful guides and friendly monitors; more especially pay a due attention to the advice and admonition of your virtuous and religious parents, who, if they do their own duty, will take care to advise you for the best; and never despise their persons, or make a jest of their particular infirmities, a bad return for the pains and trouble they have taken for you in your infancy, and the provident care they daily take for your better settlement in the world; but such a return, alas! as too many sons and daughters have likewise made in this degenerate age to the very fondest of parents!

“Youth is not the season made only for joy,” as some of your gay thoughtless equals would persuade you, but is rather that season of life, wherein the foundation is to be laid, not only of your future credit and
 B 2 reputation

reputation with the world, but of your future happiness or misery, temporal as well as eternal; and your *fate* or *fortune*, to speak in the language of the vulgar, may be determined almost irrevocably by the plan ye set out upon at the beginning. *Choose* therefore with prudence and caution; and let not indolence cast a cloud over your mental faculties, nor the love of pleasure seduce your soft and yielding tempers into the paths of folly, riot, and dissipation.

Endeavour, then, in the *first place* to qualify yourselves for those public offices in the service of your country, unto which your birth and rank may intitle some of you, or a laudable ambition may prompt you to aspire unto; or, for those honest employments, for which your parents may design you, and your own situation and circumstances in life may render proper for you; and this, by a diligent application to those previous studies, which are preparatory thereunto. And at the same time forget
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not to furnish yourselves with such useful accomplishments, and to lay in such a store of wise reflections, and rules of moral conduct, as may render your acquaintance a blessing to your youthful companions and equals, and your conversation agreeable to the good and virtuous, how much soever in age and other respects your superiors; which may be attended with better consequences than many of you may perhaps imagine. For, let me tell you, men of sense and virtue do often take a particular pleasure in encouraging; or, if they have it not in their power to promote them themselves, in *recommending*, young persons of a sober turn of mind, of promising parts and abilities, tho' not otherwise related to them; where they see honesty joined with diligence and industry, and accompanied with a decent modesty: And such merit is not so commonly overlooked, where discretion is not wanting, where prudence is awake and ready to take immediate advantage of those seasons and opportunities, which offer in almost every person's

person's life, who discovers in the earlier parts of it any signs of genius and capacity. For, if ye look abroad into the world, ye shall find numberless instances, especially in our great metropolis, of persons, who have figured in the highest ranks of life, that were neither born to riches nor honours, and had nothing else to recommend them to their patrons and benefactors, than the integrity, the industry and abilities, they discovered in their youth in that inferior capacity, wherein they were then employed. This should be enough to excite a laudable ambition in those among you, whose parents can do little more than give you such a virtuous and liberal education, as will qualify you to receive the like helps and encouragements, whensoever they may offer, and enable you to make a proper advantage of your opportunities.

2^{ally}. — “*Flee youthful lusts,*” (ii. Tim. chap. ii, ver. 22) in whatsoever sense they are taken, whether *foolish affectations of novelty,*

novelty, new modes of dress or behaviour, which have nothing but the novelty to recommend them, and shew more of vanity and foppery, than good sense or regard to decency; or, in the common acceptance of the words, "*Those carnal lusts and appetites unto which your youth is so much exposed,*" the inordinate gratification of which will not only injure your health and constitution, your reputation and character, and may disable you perhaps for the business of your calling or profession, but "*war against the soul,*" as St. Peter acquaints you (i. Pet. chap. ii, ver. 11.); and, if continued to be indulged, will at length drown men in destruction and misery.

But note here (as indeed there is but little reason to imagine ye will be unattentive to such a circumstance), that I do not debar you from any of those innocent diversions and relaxations, with which the strictest and gravest moralists have indulged you upon occasions, which may safely admit of them; but remember still, that there

is a mean to be observed *here*. These are not to be made your principal study and employment. They are not to engross so much of your time, as to leave no room for better acquisitions; nor to take such absolute possession of your hearts, as to make you dislike every thing that is grave and serious, or carries an air of business with it, they are to be at least innocent pleasures and harmless amusements; but, as even such can yield no solid, no permanent satisfaction, the less time therefore can be allowed in the pursuit of them, where one indulgence may produce another, and at length end in such a habit, as would render you despicable in the eyes of Men, and abominable in the sight of God, who sent you into the world upon a better errand, than to riot and take your pastime therein.

3dly. Above all things, *remember* your creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, when ye shall find, that ye can have no other pleasure in them, than the conscience of having been always
mindful

mindful of your duty to God, as well as Man ; and of having discharged all the obligations ye lay under to each, according to the best of your powers and abilities.

Remember your creator, at this most pleasant, but most critical period of your lives, when ye are under the greatest obligations to call him to your *remembrance*, in point of gratitude for the extraordinary favours he daily pours down upon you ; but are in the utmost danger of forgetting him from the variety of temptations that surround you, and draw off your attention ; but *remember* him always with the profoundest reverence and regard. Let not the vicious examples of a profligate age betray you into that odious practice of profaning the sacred name of God by *vain oaths* and *execrations*, so much in fashion among the great vulgar as well as the small, in which even children are now become proficient : Nor let the fear of shame, if not of punishment, when ye have been guilty of a folly or a crime, which at your age is likely enough to happen too often, drive you to seek *refuge in*
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lyes ;

Yes; one of the most daring affronts that can be offered to the God of Truth, who is often invoked to bear witness on such occasions, as well as one of the meanest and basest offences, and what will degrade you the lowest in the sight of men. Let the *fear of God*, therefore, be always before your eyes, when the violence of your passions might prompt you to transgress the bounds of innocence and decency, or your weakness tempt you to prevaricate and deny the truth, or the vicious examples of others seduce you; a *filial ingenuous fear*, mixt with love, arising from a just admiration of his glorious attributes, and a sense of gratitude to your greatest benefactor, unto whom ye would not willingly shew the least disrespect; not a dastardly cowardly fear, which springs only from the dread of punishment, without any inward sense of duty, or regard to virtue.

Fear God, I say, and at the same time *love him*, and shew this *fear* and *love* to be real, by *keeping his commandments*; which
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ye will not find *grievous* upon the trial, whatsoever some of you may perhaps imagine, but still more and more agreeable, the longer ye shall have conformed unto them. This is what, I assure you, will be your highest interest, as what will afford you immediate pleasure, pure and unalloyed, and bring you peace at the last. This ye will find to be the truest wisdom in the event and conclusion, and is what will add greatly to your credit and reputation even in this age of libertinism, provided your piety be freed from the suspicion of enthusiasm or hypocrisy (both of which youth as well as age have been sometimes infected with), and your virtue be steady and uniform; for virtue has still some friends, and many of those who will not practise it themselves, have a respect for it in others, especially when they behold its angelical beauties displayed, without pride and affectation, in the full bloom and vigour of youth; which raise the greater admiration, as the less expected at that age, too commonly the age of levity and inconsideration.

Accordingly the Psalmist declares, that
*"the fear of the Lord (which includes
 piety and virtue in their several branches),
 is the beginning of wisdom;"* not only the
 first in time, or the foundation; but the
 first in worth and dignity, the prime and
 principal part of wisdom; *"A good under-
 standing have all they that do his command-
 ments."* (Psalm cxi, ver. 10. vid. Job, chap.
 xxviii, ver. 28.) And by making these
 his delight and the constant invariable
 rule of all his actions, David boasts, that he
 had defeated, or God had defeated for him,
 all the machinations of his enemies, and
 out-stripped his former teachers and in-
 structors, nay even the wisest of his judges
 and counsellors, in all that knowledge
 which was useful to him in the govern-
 ment of himself, and the conduct of public
 affairs; notwithstanding Achitophel, whose
counsel was as the oracle of God, had been
 one of them before his defection to Absa-
 lom. *"Thou through thy commandments
 hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for
 they are ever with me. I have more under-
 standing than my teachers, for thy testimonies*
 are

are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."
(Psalm cxix, ver. 98, 99, 100.)

And thus my young pupils (I will not ironically call you *masters*) I have read you a short lecture, which ye will do well to remember, and the shorter the easier to be remembered, by which, without waiting for old age, ye may render your youth respectable, and recommend yourselves to the just esteem of the world; which will be attended with many probable advantages in this present life, and will crown you with an eternal weight of glory in the next: Whereas, a contrary behaviour will be attended with present disgrace and infamy, and intail upon you shame and confusion of face to all eternity. And both these consequences ye may absolutely depend upon, notwithstanding the suggestions of those fashionable authors, with whose poisonous writings so many young persons of the present age have been corrupted, before they were capable of forming a proper judgment

judgment of things, and of distinguishing between reason and sophistry, truth and fiction.

But it must not be supposed, that the youth of one sex only are concerned in this address, tho' *young men* are particularly address'd; a good part of it may be applied to my younger hearers of the other. Piety towards God, and a modest decent behaviour before men; a purity of mind and sanctity of manners, the knowledge of what is fit and proper, nay their duty in those several relations of life wherein they *stand*, particularly towards their parents (in which I presume the youth of both sexes have been well instructed), or wherein many of them *may probably stand*, are some of the most essential ingredients in the female character; and by the goodness of their character the sex will be estimated, and rise in value in the opinion of those, whose approbation is only to be regarded, and not by their beauty only: Beauty will soon fade of itself, or grow familiar by a little acquaintance.

acquaintance. But there are mental accomplishments, which will not only make up for personal defects, but when super-added to those outward charms, which so many of them possess, will make them the delight of good men and angels, if not really those angels, which the fondness of their lovers imagines some to be, who have nothing angelical, perhaps, about them, but their persons; which will not only display their lustre to the best advantage before men to the honour of their creator, but *make them shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.*

Let them, therefore, from their earliest youth attend to something more essential than dress (tho' not negligent of their persons), to something more than *modes* and *fashions*, which, in that of dress especially, as in many other instances, are not only variable, but oftentimes highly ridiculous and extravagant; let them not devote themselves entirely to the reigning
vanities

vanities and amusements of the times, as if they had nothing domestic to employ themselves about, nor lose themselves in one continual round of pleasure and dissipation: And, if they have any leisure time to spare from their necessary engagements, let them not throw away those precious moments in the perusal of idle novels and fictitious adventures, which often corrupt the morals as well as defile the imagination, when there are so many real histories to be had, whence something instructive as well as entertaining may be learned; so many good books, together with the bible, to be so easily procured, which not only teach them their duty in the various stations of life, but furnish the mind with the most noble and most refined ideas. Let them therefore, I say, among their other accomplishments, endeavour to furnish themselves, at this proper season, with those real ornaments, those internal graces, which will raise them above the common level of their own sex, and make them rival ours in sense and understanding,

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in a propriety and decency of behaviour, who do indeed willingly acknowledge their superiority as to those external charms, by which the senses are captivated, while the mind would be glad to see something that ought to engage its esteem and admiration !

And this advice, which is indeed worthy of all acceptance, will not, I hope, be thrown away, but be received with all due respect and candor, as it is really intended for their welfare and happiness, and given by one, who would do his utmost to promote it, and will be always glad of every fair opportunity of paying a just regard to their virtues ; but whose duty obliges him, as their sex makes one moiety of his pastoral charge, and commonly more than one half of his audience, to remind them of any omissions of their own, and to caution them against the errors and extravagancies of others, who take upon them to lead the fashion, not only in modes of dress and of external ceremony in public assemblies, but to prescribe rules for female conduct

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and behaviour in domestic life; and affairs
 of a more serious nature; and too often
 establish them by the influence of their
 own bad examples; which they, unto
 whom this is addressed; 'as to be hoped;
 will avoid; and become themselves shining
 patterns of virtue; by copying rather the
 examples of holy women given; and re-
 commended unto them; in the sacred
 scriptures; which still retain their authority
 among the wise and good; how little
 however they may be regarded by our present
 pastors and ministers who follow; with those
 distinguished and numerous examples; as formerly
 it might be to desire which have made
 themselves the more precious; and are
 therefore only to be to be matched with such
 worth.



T H E E N D

